

[120] **TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME B**

FIRST READING

You may add nothing to the word which I speak to you;
keep the commands of the Lord.

A reading from the book of Deuteronomy

4:1-2, 6-8

Moses said:

“People of Israel,
listen carefully to the laws and commands that I am teaching you.
If you obey them, you will live,
and you will take the land
that the Lord God of your ancestors is giving you.
I am telling you what the Lord your God has commanded.
Don’t add anything or take anything away.

”By faithfully obeying these commands,
you will show other nations how wise and understanding you are.
They will learn about these laws and say,
‘This great nation is very wise and understanding.’

“No other great nation has a god who is close enough
to answer their prayers,
as the Lord God does for us.
And no other great nation has laws
that are as fair as the ones I am giving you today.”

The word of the Lord.

RESPONSORIAL PSALM

15:2-3a, 3bc and 5ef

R. (1a) The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

Only those who obey God
and do as they should
speak the truth
and don’t spread gossip.

R. The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

They treat others fairly
and don’t say cruel things.

Those who do these things
will always stand firm.

R. The just will live in the presence of the Lord.

SECOND READING

Be doers of the word.

A reading from the letter of James

1:17-18, 21b-22

Brothers and sisters:

Every good and perfect gift comes down from the Father
who created all the lights in the heavens.
He is always the same and never makes dark shadows by changing.
He wanted us to be his own special people,
and so he sent the true message to give us new birth.

Be humble and accept the message that is planted in you to save you.

Obey God's message!
Don't fool yourselves by just listening to it.

The word of the Lord.

ALLELUIA

James 1:18

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

The Father gave us birth by his message of truth,
that we might be as the first fruits of his creation.

R. Alleluia, alleluia.

GOSPEL

You forget the commandments of God and hold on to human tradition.

† A reading from the holy gospel according to Mark

7:1-5, 14-16, 21-23

Some Pharisees and several teachers of the Law of Moses from Jerusalem

came and gathered around Jesus.
They noticed that some of his disciples
ate without first washing their hands.

The Pharisees and all other Jewish people
obey the teachings of their ancestors.
They always wash their hands in the proper way before eating.
None of them will eat anything they buy in the market
until it is washed.
They also follow a lot of other teachings,
such as washing cups, pitchers, and bowls.

The Pharisees and teachers asked Jesus,
“Why don’t your disciples obey what our ancestors taught us to do?
Why do they eat without washing their hands?”

Jesus called the crowd together again and said,
“Pay attention and try to understand what I mean.
The food that you put into your mouth
does not make you unclean and unfit to worship God.
The bad words that come out of your mouth are what make you unclean.

“Out of your heart come evil thoughts, vulgar deeds,
stealing, murder, unfaithfulness in marriage,
greed, meanness, deceit,
indecentcy, envy, insults, pride and foolishness.
All of these come from your heart,
and they are what make you unfit to worship God.”

The gospel of the Lord.

TWENTY-SECOND SUNDAY OF ORDINARY TIME Cycle B

Prayer:

Dear Jesus,
Thank you for showing me how to live a good and happy life. Please help me to keep you in my heart and to live as you want me to live.
In your name I pray,
Amen

Readings:

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
Psalm 15:2-3a, 3bc and 5ef
James 1:17-18, 21b-22
Mark 7:1-5, 14-16, 21-23

Reflection:

Today we hear a lot about obeying rules. When we think about rules in general we don't like the idea of rules. They keep us from doing whatever we want. We might even think they keep us from being free. Jesus didn't like all rules either. He tells us today that some rules are silly and should not be followed if they don't serve a purpose. He also tells us that some rules help us live happier lives and help us to be freer than if we did anything we wanted. What would happen if no one had to stop at stop lights or could drive any speed they wanted? There would be a lot of car accidents. Many people would be hurt and killed. What would happen if you were allowed to stay up all night with no bed time? You would be too tired to play, have fun and learn. In addition you would be cranky and unhappy. So, often rules are there to help us be happier.

Jesus is also teaching us that following rules just because they are rules is not good either. We must follow them because we believe in them. For example, if we say something nice about someone but in our minds and hearts are thinking and feeling bad things about them it is just like we said something bad. If we pretend to love others but really hate them it is still bad. If we go to church every Sunday because it is a rule and not because we want to go and worship with our faith community then it is just like we didn't go at all. Jesus wants us to know that while obeying rules is important it is also very important to believe in them and to follow them in our hearts.

Activity:

Materials needed: 1 package of plain white paper plates – enough for 2 for every child, stapler(s), 3 x 5 index cards – 1 for each child, markers/crayons/colored pencils, etc.

Preparation: Cut a large heart out of each paper plate – 2 for each child. Before class, set out 2 hearts and an index card for each child.

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Directions: Instruct the children to draw a sad face on 1 of the hearts and then on the other side of the heart with the sad face they should draw pictures or write some things that make their hearts evil such as lying, being mean, disobeying, etc. Talk about how evil things make us, others and God feel sad. On the other heart have the children make a happy face. On the other side of the happy face ask them to draw or write things that make their hearts holy such as sharing, helping others, etc. Talk about how having holy hearts makes us, others and God happy. When they have finished, staples the two hearts together leaving the top open. Help them all write the word "Jesus" in big letters on the index card and then put the index card into their heart. Talk about how having Jesus in their hearts helps them turn their hearts from evil to holy.